Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP) launched in 1996-97 has been provided an outlay of Rs.7121 crores in the year 2006-07 as against an outlay of Rs.4500 crores it the year 2005-06 to improve the pace of implementation/completion of the on-going irrigation projects.

Micro Irrigation Technology comprising drip and sprinkler technology is promoted on a large scale to increse the coverge to 3 million hectares by the end of Tenth plan and to 14 million hectares by the end of the Eleventh Plan.

Rainfed farming is also encouraged in arid and semi-arid regions of the country.

National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) is under implementation to provide insurance coverage to the farmers in the event of failure of crop due to occurrence of natural clamity, pests and diseases.

To minimize post-harvest losses in agriculture produce, new techniques and systems have been devised and are disseminated to the farmers.

Necessary support is provided to the States in strengthening their extension efforts by way of dissemination of latest knowledge and technology information to farmers.

Subsidy is also provided through state departments of agriculture for enhancement of the production of good quality seeds and their distribution in respect of various crops.

Public-private partnership is encouraged in the areas of contract farming, direct marketing through amendment of Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee Act of different States.

Training Capacity of CIFNET

2902. PROF. P.J. KURIAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that CIFNET has forwarded proposals to double the training capacity for the fiscal year 2006-07;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that CIFNET wants to open more branches all over the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

Review of situation prevailing in suicide hit areas

2903. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several farmers especially in Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh committed suicide in the last few Months;

(b) whether Government have conducted any review of the situation prevailing broadly with agriculturists across the country with a view to identifying the most vulnerable ones among them, in particular, due to crop failure, price crash, etc. and evolving a rescue package to enable them the difficult situation and prevent suicides;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) Recent cases of suicide by farmers in Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh, as reported by the State Government, are as follows:

State	Period	No. of suicide by farmers
Andhra Pradesh	2004-05 (14.4.05 to 11.11.05)	1068
Maharashtra	2005	142

(b) to (d) The incidents of suicide by farmers is under review by the Government and the Government of India is in touch with the State Governments concened in this regard. Recently a meeting was held at